

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

455 Golden Gate Avenue, Suite 10600, San Francisco, California 94102 tel 415 352 3600 fax 415 352 3606

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TO: Design Review Board Members

FROM: Lawrence J. Goldzband, Executive Director (415/352-3653; lgoldzband@bcdc.ca.gov)
Ellen Miramontes, Bay Design Analyst (415/352-3643; ellenm@bcdc.ca.gov)

SUBJECT: Draft Minutes of February 9, 2015 BCDC Design Review Board Meeting

1. **Call to Order and Attendance.** The Design Review Board's Chair, John Kriken, called the meeting to order at approximately 5:20 p.m. Other Design Review Board (DRB or Board) members in attendance included Vice Chair Steve Thompson, Ephraim Hirsch, and Michael Smiley. BCDC staff in attendance included Bob Batha, Erik Buehmann, Brad McCrea, Jaime Michaels, Ellen Miramontes and Ming Yeung.

2. **Approval of Draft Minutes for the January 5, 2015 Meeting.** The Board approved the minutes with no revisions.

3. **Brooklyn Basin, Shoreline Park, City of Oakland, Alameda County; (First Review of Shoreline Park).**

a. **Staff Presentation.** Erik Buehmann introduced the project and the issues identified in the staff report, which included: whether pedestrian and bicycle connections to and along the shoreline were adequate and appropriately placed, and whether the proposed Shoreline Park provides adequate, usable, and attractive public access spaces appropriate to the development and the site.

b. **Project Presentation.** Patrick Van Ness from the Signature Development Group introduced the project by briefly summarizing the previous Design Review Board meetings on the project and providing an overview of the entire project to provide context for this focused review of Shoreline Park. Boris Dramov of ROMA Design Group presented the proposed design for Shoreline Park and explained how the design has evolved since it was originally permitted in 2011. Specifically, Mr. Dramov explained that the original design for an open lawn area was determined not to be feasible on a pile-supported structure due to weight limitations, and that the park would now feature primarily wood decking, with the exception of a paved Bay Trail pathway. He explained the desire to use salvage materials, from the portion of the Ninth Avenue Terminal building that will be demolished, to provide interpretive elements, seating, and planters in the park. Special events would be planned around the portion of the Ninth Avenue Terminal building that will remain.

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c. **Board Questions.** The Board members asked several questions.

Mr. Hirsch asked about the Ninth Avenue Terminal Building, and Mr. Dramov described the plan to demolish the majority of it, while retaining a portion of the building for community use.

Mr. Kriken asked whether there was a consistent design strategy throughout the parks, or whether each park was distinctive in its design. Mr. Dramov responded that the designs for the parks emphasized distinctive uses and design approaches: Estuary Park would be a more active and sports-oriented park; Channel Park is designed to be more natural and vegetated, with a soft shoreline; South Park is a primarily green and flexible space; Gateway Park is an urban park that would connect to the promenades on each side of Clinton Basin; and Shoreline Park would emphasize the site's historical industrial character.

Mr. Kriken asked whether the park would be used for any specific purposes. Mr. Dramov responded that the design allows for flexible and general uses throughout the park. Public trust requirements provide that the park must be regional-serving, so no playgrounds or bocce ball courts, that could be considered neighborhood-serving, were included. Shoreline Park could accommodate programming such as festivals or other special events.

Mr. Hirsch and Mr. Smiley asked about the materials covering the surface of the park. Mr. Dramov explained that the majority of the park would be wood decking over a concrete structure, but that the Bay Trail along the edge would be a paved bicycle and pedestrian pathway. Mr. Dramov addressed a comment from Bay Trail planner Lee Huo, stating that the bicycle and pedestrian pathway would not be wood decking, except for the trestle section east of the Ninth Avenue Terminal Building.

Mr. Smiley asked about the redesign of the remaining portion of the Ninth Avenue Terminal building. Mr. Dramov stated that it would be a glassy interior to maintain a positive relationship with the park, while retaining the original historical features.

d. **Public Comment.** Two members of the public made comments.

Arthur Levy, a resident of Oakland associated with the Oakland Heritage Alliance but not representing that organization, described that about ten percent of the existing Ninth Avenue Terminal building will be retained. Mr. Levy expressed his hope that Shoreline Park would be inviting and be a park the public would visit daily. He supported the proposal to open the park for public events. He understood that a green lawn was not feasible, but encouraged more plantings and seating in the area to make the park more hospitable. He supported the Bay Trail along the shoreline along with the additional bicycle lanes on the street, providing the bicyclists a choice between slow and fast speeds.

Sandy Threlfall, a member of Waterfront Action, provided background context for the removal of the majority of the Ninth Avenue Terminal building. She encouraged the seating and plantings for the park, and suggested that the design somehow reflect the size of the removed portion of the Ninth Avenue Terminal building, to demonstrate to the public how large that building once was and depict the space that it occupied. Ms. Threlfall also encouraged historical signage and complimented the proposed reuse of elements from the existing Ninth Avenue Terminal building.

e. **Board Discussion.** The Board members discussed the following:

(1) **Ninth Avenue Terminal Building and Historic Remnants.** The Board expressed regret the existing Ninth Avenue Terminal building would be demolished, and hoped the new large open space would provide an inventive future use at the site. The Board encouraged the use of historical remnants of the Ninth Avenue Terminal building in the site design, and encouraged the designers to incorporate a “ghost” of the building’s presence into the park in some manner. This could be done by retaining original columns from the building that could show the size of the building and also providing interpretive elements. The retained columns could be used for lights, sound equipment for events, shelter from the wind or shade.

(2) **Programming at the Park.** The Board discussed the flexible open space, stating that it provided expanded views of the Bay. The Board agreed that the wood decking was an acceptable change from the original lawn design, but encouraged formalized programming to activate the park for much of the year. The Board agreed with the proposed trail widths.

f. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** The Board made the following summary and conclusions:

(1) The Board agrees with the approach that each of the shoreline parks throughout the Brooklyn Basin development should have a unique identity from each other.

(2) The Board stated that the proposed Bay Trail and other shoreline path widths are adequate and appropriate.

(3) The Board agreed with concerns brought forth by the Bay Trail that the main Bay Trail routes be paved with a smooth and durable surface rather than the wood decking that will be used in other areas.

(4) The Board suggested leaving vertical elements from the portion of the terminal building to be removed in order to recall its historical presence on the site. These poles or other elements left behind could be used to temporarily support lights, banners, sound equipment, temporary backdrops or material for overhead shading associated with the special events envisioned.

(5) In order for the space to be successful, the Board believes that the large open space areas should be highly programmed.

(6) The Board recommended that the landscaped portions of the design take on a more curvilinear design while the hardscape areas could be more geometric in form.

(7) The Board concluded no future review of Shoreline Park was necessary.

g. **Project Proponent Response.** Mr. Dramov stated the park was originally envisioned as a flexible space, with an inviting wood surface in the tradition of the maritime use at the site. The grade changes would allow multiple activities. He described that the park would include many benches and some landscaping in the form of industrial planters. Approximately thirty percent of the park would be soft landscape throughout the site. Mr. Dramov briefly replied to

the Board's conclusions. He affirmed that the Ninth Avenue Terminal building could not be retained, but he would take the ideas for incorporating its size into the park design into consideration. Mr. Dramov stated a concern for incorporating too many vertical elements, as they could detract from the open nature of the park, including providing a refuge for birds.

4. Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island Redevelopment Project; (Sixth Pre-Application Review). The Design Review Board conducted a sixth pre-application review of a proposal by the Treasure Island Community Development (TICD) and Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA) to redevelop Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island (YBI) in four phases over 10-15 years. The project includes 8,000 residential units, 450,000 square feet of retail space, up to 500 hotel rooms and a cultural center; a new ferry terminal and transit program; approximately 300 acres of new public park and open space; and an approximately 3-mile-long public shoreline trail around Treasure Island and various trails on Yerba Buena Island.

a. **Staff Presentation.** Ming Yeung introduced the project and explained the focus of the evening's review identified in the staff report, which included the following three focused topic areas: more detail on the design of the Ferry Plaza and Ferry Shelter on Treasure Island; public access connections on YBI; and Clipper Cove Beach Park and recreational water access there.

b. **Meeting Format.** The Board members decided to address the three topic areas of review separately. So each topic area was presented separately, followed by questions and public comment on that item, and then Board discussion.

c. **Project Presentation on Ferry Terminal.** Blake Sanborn of AECOM provided a description of the Ferry Terminal including: information on the ferry float; the interface with the Bay Trail; pedestrian, bicycle, and bus loading/unloading programming in the Ferry Terminal area; the proposed seating and landscaping elements; and proposed bicycle parking at the site. Amy Eliot of Dilworth Eliot Studio then provided a presentation of the Ferry Shelter and described the design elements of the shelter. Brad Porter of Moffat and Nichol followed up with more specific details on the construction of the ferry terminal, ferry gangway and float.

d. **Board Questions on Ferry Terminal.** Mr. Thompson and Mr. Smiley asked about bicycle parking and bicycle rentals and where these would be accommodated. They also asked how bicycles queuing for the ferry would be managed. Mr. Sanborn explained that bicycle parking would be in racks located near the Ferry Terminal and showed these locations on the site plan. City bikeshare bicycles are also proposed at the site and would also be accommodated in racks, similar to how they are found elsewhere in San Francisco. Opportunities for a bike rental vendor such as Blazing Saddles could be accommodated near the Ferry Terminal or near Building 1. As to bicycle queuing for the ferry, Mr. Sanborn explained that the ferry operator would manage this as they do in other locations, such as in Sausalito. Bicycle parking would be accommodated near the Ferry Terminal for those commuters who may want to leave their bikes on Treasure Island, and for those who are boarding with a bike, they could board after all passengers without bikes have boarded. Mr. Sanborn explained that the Ferry Shelter and Plaza have been designed with flexibility to allow the operator to best manage

pedestrian flows and bicycles. Mr. Smiley asked if there was some estimate on what the bicycle volumes at this location would be and commented that he could see this being a very popular bicycle route with bicycle passengers either originating from the East Bay by biking across the east span of the Bay Bridge to Treasure Island and then wanting to take a ferry across to San Francisco to continue their bike ride, or the same in the opposite direction. He noted that more data is needed to understand the estimated bicycle volumes.

Mr. Smiley then asked about the bicycle lane in front of the ferry terminal. Mr. Sanborn explained that the bicycle lane is proposed as a one-way southbound, five-foot depressed cycle track adjacent to the Bay Trail. Mr. Smiley questioned why the bicycle lane is only one-way and not two-way, and commented that bicyclists will likely ignore these limitations and “fly past” that area if they are able to. Mr. Kriken commented that perhaps there is an opportunity to have something more adaptable by leaving enough space so that it can be programmed and designed in the future.

e. **Public Comment on Ferry Terminal.** Maureen Gaffney of the Bay Trail commented that there is concern about the circulation near the Ferry Terminal. Bicyclists are unlikely to cross over to the waterside and walk their bikes past the Ferry Shelter. The Bay Trail feels strongly that there should be a different solution for a two-way Bay Trail for bicycles on the waterside.

f. **Board Discussion on Ferry Terminal.** The Board members discussed the following:

(1) **Ferry Shelter.** The Board agreed that it liked the architectural design of the Ferry Shelter, it reminded them of ferry shelters elsewhere. One Board member commented that its modernistic design, however beautiful, may not connect or have anything to do with Building 1 across from it and questioned whether it could have “a slightly more opaque nature to its edges” in order to tie in with Building 1.

(2) **Ferry Plaza.** The Board discussed the riprap edge and asked whether there is or there could be a stronger edge treatment to warn the public (particularly at night) of the drop-off towards the Bay. One Board member also asked whether there could be a softer landscape treatment with vegetation along this edge.

(3) **Bay Trail.** The Board commented that the bicycle, pedestrian and bus loading/unloading concerns at this location have not been adequately addressed and could become a big problem. One Board member expressed that the bicycle circulation is not functional and that the project needs to build in and address the reality that bicyclists are unlikely to dismount and walk their bikes through this area. He stated that there needs to be a way to make sure bikes can move through the area and not impact other users so that a problem “like the Embarcadero” does not occur here as well. Another Board member commented that since we do not know what the future condition will be, the approach should be to first observe conditions and purposely build in adaptability to address future conditions.

g. **Project Presentation on Public Access Connections.** Chris Guillard of CMG Landscape Architecture described the proposed pedestrian and bicycle circulation between Treasure Island and YBI and from the east span of the Bay Bridge, including proposed roadway sections and plans for Macalla Road, Treasure Island Road, Hillcrest Road, and Clipper Cove Avenue.

h. **Board Questions on Public Access Connections.** Mr. Kriken and Mr. Smiley asked clarifying questions on the various proposed roadways and bicycle accommodations, including questions on signage, one-way versus two-way accommodations, and bike trail classifications in certain narrow roadways.

i. **Public Comment on Public Access Connections.** Maureen Gaffney of the Bay Trail commented that there is lack of robust facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians along Hillcrest Road and that this part of the Bay Trail alignment is lacking. She also wanted clarification on whether Clipper Cove Promenade provides a two-way cycle track, which was confirmed.

j. **Board Discussion on Public Access Connections.** The Board members generally commented that the bicycle and pedestrian connections to and from Treasure Island and YBI are adequate and well-designed. One Board member commented that while the connection from off the Bay Bridge is “as good as it can be,” they expressed concern about the intersection of South Gate Road and Hillcrest Road where there will be an inclination for bicyclists to cross the intersection across the east bound off-ramp where there is no traffic signal or crosswalk planned. There was discussion on whether there is an opportunity to create that connection and also the desire to provide two-way bicycle accommodations on Hillcrest Avenue.

k. **Project Presentation, Board Questions, Public Comment and Board Discussion on Clipper Cove Beach Park.** Chris Guillard presented a short presentation on Clipper Cove Beach Park and the proposed connections to the beach including a beach access path, a proposed beach access stair and a small boat winch lift. The Board had no questions and there was no public comment on this topic. The Board briefly discussed that it liked the small boat access to the beach and the proposed circulation improvements.

l. **Board Summary and Conclusions.** The Board made the following summary and conclusions:

(1) **Refine Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation at Ferry Shelter and Plaza.** The Board stated that the pedestrian and bicycle circulation in and around the Ferry Shelter and Plaza needs further refinement. While it is important that there be flexibility for adaptation in the future, there should be a clear plan in place for pedestrian and bicycle circulation that responds to what is known now in regards to expected numbers of people transiting through area by various modes and their expected directions of travel. A northbound bike lane should be included since it is not realistic that northbound bicyclists will walk through the plaza area, while southbound bicyclists ride through the area. Both slower, recreational as well as faster, more serious bicyclists need to be accommodated in moving through this area. There was also mention that bike lockers would be desired in addition to bike racks.

(2) **Ferry Shelter Design.** Overall the Board responded positively to the proposed design of the very open shelter, although there was a desire expressed that the shelter be “a bit more solid in nature” at its base.

(3) **Refine Shoreline Edge Adjacent to Ferry Shelter.** The Board suggested that some edge treatment at the top of the riprap slope be provided in order to provide a sense of safety for people moving along the waterfront walkway. There was also discussion regarding the opportunity to manipulate the shoreline edge within the breakwaters in order to create a softer and “more sculpted” character that could incorporate vegetated pockets along the shoreline given the protected nature that this area will have.

(4) **Pedestrian and Bicycle Access on YBI.** Generally, the Board thought that the proposed pedestrian and bicycle circulation on YBI was well-designed and would function well. One missing element highlighted, was the desire for two-way bicycle accommodations on Hillcrest Road rather than just the one-way bicycle lane that is currently proposed from Treasure Island Road around the south side of the island to the meet up with the path on the east span of the Bay Bridge. It was also noted that there is no safe way for bicyclists at the intersection of Hillcrest Road and South Gate Road to get across the intersection at the eastbound off-ramp to the Bay Bridge bike path and that this missing gap needs to be solved.

(5) **Clipper Cove Beach Park and Water Access.** The Board responded favorably to the additional access elements proposed at Clipper Cove. They were pleased to see the incorporation of the amenities for non-motorized small boat access such as the lower level beach access path and the small boat winch lift placed along the stairs.

m. **Project Proponent Response.** Mr. James Suh thanked the Board for their comments and stated that many of the issues that the Board expressed are ones that the applicant has been struggling with and has been meeting with the City and the SFMTA to address. The conversations will continue.

5. **Adjournment.** Mr. Kriken adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

ELLEN MIRAMONTES
Bay Design Analyst